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PP RUEHAG RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHLZ  
RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHVK RUEHYG  
DE RUEHAH #0259 0520851  
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P 210851Z FEB 08  
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0318  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 3419  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1237  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1104  
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY 1673  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0738  
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE PRIORITY 2252  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000259

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN  
USAID/W FOR EE/AA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [SOCI](#) [TI](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN PROVIDES MORE HUMANITARIAN AID, THIS  
TIME TO TAJIKISTAN

REF: ASHGABAT 0199

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Following on its decision to send aid to Afghanistan (reftel), Turkmenistan donated fuel as humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan on February 13, publicly demonstrating the strong bilateral ties it shares with its neighbor, but also making its mark as a responsible regional player. Turkmenistan has also brought its electricity deliveries to Tajikistan up to previously-agreed levels, now that historic low winter temperatures in Turkmenistan have eased. END SUMMARY.

¶3. (U) On February 13, Turkmen state television news reported President Berdimuhamedov had issued a decree to donate 500 tons of diesel fuel to Tajikistan. A News Central Asia Internet report estimated the value of the fuel at about \$385,000, based on the fuel's retail value in China. The fuel arrived in Tajikistan on February 18. Berdimuhamedov announced the donation after meeting with Tajikistan's Minister of Energy Sherali Gulov, who was in Ashgabat for a Turkmen-Tajik economic commission session.

¶4. (U) Turkmenistan's government has stepped up its relationship with Tajikistan since former President Niyazov's death, and appears to be increasingly sympathetic to Tajikistan's economic and energy woes. According to Tajikistan's press, Turkmenistan has forgiven some \$13 million of Tajik debt since 2005. According to the same source, the Tajiks still owe about \$23 million, described as inter-bank debts, as well as electricity- and agriculture-related debts.

¶5. (U) Turkmenistan has also been supplying Tajikistan with a significant portion of its electricity needs since November 2007. During the coldest periods of the winter, deliveries of electricity dropped from about 6 kilowatt hours to about 3 kilowatt hours per day because of Turkmenistan's climbing

domestic demand, but as of February 19, daily delivery had reached 7.5 kilowatt hours.

16. (SBU) COMMENT: Given the positive press created by Turkmenistan's delivery of a large caravan of humanitarian aid to Afghanistan in early February (reftel), Berdimuhamedov may view a donation of aid to Tajikistan as another opportunity to demonstrate publicly Turkmenistan's potential as a regional leader. But the relationship between Turkmenistan and Tajikistan is genuinely good -- President Rahmon was one of the first regional leaders to stretch out a hand of friendship to Berdimuhamedov, attending both former President Niyazov's funeral and President Berdimuhamedov's inauguration. With back-to-back aid to both Afghanistan and Tajikistan, Turkmenistan is positioning itself as a responsible regional player. END COMMENT.  
HOAGLAND